

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

[Docket No. ????????; I.D. GF001]

Climate Program Office for FY 2009

AGENCY: OAR Climate Program Office (CPO), Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of funding availability.

SUMMARY: NOAA'S Climate Mission Goal is to understand climate variability and change to enhance society's ability to plan and respond. The long-term climate efforts of NOAA are designed to develop a predictive understanding of variability and change in the global climate system, and to advance the application of this information in climate-sensitive sectors through a suite of process research, observations and modeling, and application and assessment activities. The NOAA Climate Program Office coordinates climate activities across all NOAA in fulfillment of NOAA's Climate Mission Goal. The Program partners with Federal, academic, private, and international research institutions and is a key contributing element of the U.S. Climate Change Science Program (CCSP).

DATES: Full applications for all Competitions must be received by 5 p.m. Eastern Time, October 9, 2008. Letters of Intent for all Competitions, although not required, should be received by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time, August 11, 2008. LOIs should be submitted by email to the identified Competition Manager.

ADDRESSES: Application packages are available at Grants.gov (<http://www.grants.gov>)

Apply for Grants. For applicants without Internet access, please contact the CPO

Grants Manager Diane Brown by mail at NOAA Climate Program Office (R/CP1), SSMC3,

Room 12112, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910 to obtain an Application Package. Please allow two weeks after receipt for a response.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Please visit the CPO website for further information <http://www.climate.noaa.gov/> or contact the CPO Grants Manager, Diane Brown by mail (see address above). Please allow up to two weeks after receipt for a response.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: NOAA's Climate Mission Goal is to "understand climate variability and change to enhance society's ability to plan and respond." This is an end-to-end endeavor whose overall objective is to provide decision-makers with a predictive understanding of the climate and to communicate climate information so that the public can incorporate it into their decisions. The NOAA Climate Program was established to enhance NOAA's ability to achieve its Climate Mission Goal. The Program is a key contributing element of the U.S. Climate Change Science Program (CCSP). NOAA's Climate Program integrates Federal, academic, private, and international partners into that national effort and complements the contributions of other agencies. The Program builds on NOAA's long-standing capabilities in climate variability and change research and prediction. NOAA's Climate Program is addressing climate initiatives outlined in the Climate Change Science Program (CCSP) that encompasses both the U.S. Global Change Research Program (USGCRP) and the Climate Change Research Initiative (CCRI). NOAA's Program is an integral part of the interagency CCSP. Changing climate confronts us with significant economic, health, safety, and national security implications. NOAA has a significant responsibility in operational observation, research, prediction, and information management efforts for the climate and global change study effort.

ELECTRONIC ACCESS: The full text of the full funding opportunity announcement for this program can be accessed via the Grants.gov web site at <http://www.grants.gov> . The announcement will also be available by contacting the program officials identified under

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT. Applicants must comply with all requirements contained in the full funding opportunity announcement.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: 49 U.S.C. 47720(b), 15 U.S.C. 2904, 15 U.S.C. 2931–2934

CFDA: 11.431, Climate and Atmospheric Research

FUNDING AVAILABILITY: In FY 2007, approximately \$8M in first-year funding was available for 94 new awards. Similar funds and number of awards are anticipated in FY 2009. Please be advised that the number of new awards and funding levels will depend upon the final FY 2009 budget appropriations. It is anticipated that awards will be up to three years in length and cost between \$50,000 and \$200,000 per year. Federal funding for FY 2010 may be used to fund some awards submitted under this Competition. Current or previous grantees are eligible to apply for a new award that builds on, but does not replicate, activities covered in the current or previous award. Current grantees should not apply for supplementary funding through this announcement.

ELIGIBILITY: Eligible applicants are institutions of higher education, other nonprofits, commercial organizations, international organizations, and state, local and Indian tribal governments. Federal agencies or institutions are not eligible to receive Federal assistance under this notice.

COST SHARING REQUIREMENTS: None

EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCEDURES: The general evaluation criteria and selection factors that apply to full applications to this funding opportunity are summarized below. The evaluation criteria for full applications will have different weights and details. Further information about the evaluation criteria and selection factors can be found in the full funding opportunity announcement.

EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR PROJECTS: 1. Importance/Relevance and

Applicability of Application to the Program Goals (50%) This criterion ascertains whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and/or relevance to NOAA, federal, regional, state, or local activities. For the CPO Grant Program Competition, this includes importance and relevance to the goals of the selected Competition(s).

2. Technical/Scientific Merit (50%) This criterion assesses whether the approach is technically sound and/or innovative, if the methods are appropriate, and whether there are clear project goals and objectives.

3. Overall Qualifications of Applicants (0%) This criterion assesses whether the applicant, and team members, possess the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project. For the CPO Grant Program Competition, this criterion is not scored.

4. Project Costs (0%) This criterion evaluates the budget to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time frame. For the CPO Grant Program Competition, this criterion is not scored.

5. Outreach and Education (0%) This criterion assesses whether the project provides a focused and effective education and outreach strategy regarding NOAA's mission to protect the Nation's natural resources. For the CPO Grant Program Competition, this criterion is not scored.

REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS: Once a full application has been received, an administrative review will be conducted to determine compliance with requirements and completeness of the application. Independent peer mail reviewers, and/or independent peer panel reviewers consisting of both Federal and non-Federal experts will evaluate full applications in accordance with the evaluation criteria listed below. The panel will not give consensus advice. The identity of mail reviewers and panel reviewers are privileged. If a peer panel review is conducted, the scores from each peer panel reviewer for each application will be averaged to produce a single numerical score for the application. Occasionally a reviewer may, due to lack of familiarity in a particular area, choose not to score a particular application. The average scores for all applications result in a numerical rank order within

each Competition. If peer mail review and peer panel review are both conducted, the available peer mail reviews will be provided to the peer review panel for use in its deliberations prior to providing its ratings. If only a peer panel review or both a peer panel review and a peer mail review are conducted, the Competition Manager will use the numerical rank order of the peer review panel to determine funding recommendations. If only a mail peer review is conducted, the Competition Manager will use the rank numerical order of the mail reviews to determine funding recommendations. The Competition Manager will recommend applications to the Selecting Official in numerical rank order unless a recommendation out of rank order is justified based upon any of the factors listed in the following section. The Competition Manager will review the amounts requested for each selected application (including costs for computing and networking services) and recommend the total duration and the amount of funding, which may be less than the application and budget requested. The Selecting Official will review the recommendations.

SELECTION FACTORS FOR PROJECTS: The Selecting Official shall select award in rank order unless a selection out of rank order is justified based upon any of the following factors: 1.Availability of funding 2.Balance/distribution of funds a.Geographically b.By type of institutions c.By type of partners d.By research area e.By project types 3.Duplication of other projects funded or considered for funding by NOAA/federal agencies 4.Program priorities and policy factors 5.Applicants prior award performance 6.Partnerships with/Participation of targeted group 7.Adequacy of information necessary for NOAA staff to make a NEPA determination and draft necessary documentation before recommendations for funding are made to the Grants Officer. The Selecting Official makes final recommendations for award to the Grants Officer who is authorized to obligate the funds.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW: Applications under this program are not subject to Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of federal programs.

LIMITATION OF LIABILITY: In no event will NOAA or the Department of Commerce be responsible for proposal preparation costs if these programs fail to receive funding or are cancelled because of other agency priorities. Publication of this announcement does not oblige NOAA to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds.

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (NEPA): NOAA must analyze the potential environmental impacts, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), for applicant projects or proposals which are seeking NOAA federal funding opportunities. Detailed information on NOAA compliance with NEPA can be found at the following NOAA NEPA website: <http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/> , including our NOAA Administrative Order 216-6 for NEPA, http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/NAO216_6_TOC.pdf , and the Council on Environmental Quality implementation regulations, http://ceq.eh.doe.gov/nepa/regs/ceq/toc_ceq.htm. Consequently, as part of an applicant's package, and under their description of their program activities, applicants are required to provide detailed information on the activities to be conducted, locations, sites, species and habitat to be affected, possible construction activities, and any environmental concerns that may exist (e.g., the use and disposal of hazardous or toxic chemicals, introduction of non-indigenous species, impacts to endangered and threatened species, aquaculture projects, and impacts to coral reef systems). In addition to providing specific information that will serve as the basis for any required impact analyses, applicants may also be requested to assist NOAA in drafting of an environmental assessment, if NOAA determines an assessment is required. Applicants will also be required to cooperate with NOAA in identifying feasible measures to reduce or avoid any identified adverse environmental impacts of their proposal. The failure to do so shall be grounds for not selecting an application. In some cases if additional information is required after an application is selected, funds can be withheld by the Grants Officer under a special award condition requiring the recipient to

submit additional environmental compliance information sufficient to enable NOAA to make an assessment on any impacts that a project may have on the environment.

THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE PRE-AWARD NOTIFICATION

REQUIREMENTS FOR GRANTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS: The Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements contained in the Federal Register notice of February 11, 2008 (73 FR 7696), are applicable to this solicitation.

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT: This document contains collection-of-information requirements subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA). The use of Standard Forms 424, 424A, 424B, and SF-LLL and CD-346 has been approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under the respective control numbers 0348-0043, 0348-0044, 0348-0040, 0348-0046, and 0605-0001.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person is required to, nor shall a person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with, a collection of information subject to the requirements of the PRA unless that collection of information displays a currently valid OMB control number.

EXECUTIVE ORDER 12866: This notice has been determined to be not significant for purposes of Executive Order 12866.

EXECUTIVE ORDER 13132 (FEDERALISM): It has been determined that this notice does not contain policies with Federalism implications as that term is defined in Executive Order 13132.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE ACT/REGULATORY FLEXIBILITY ACT: Prior notice and an opportunity for public comment are not required by the Administrative Procedure Act or any other law for rules concerning public property, loans, grants, benefits, and contracts (5 U.S.C. 553(a)(2)). Because notice and opportunity for comment are not

required pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553 or any other law, the analytical requirements for the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) are inapplicable. Therefore, a regulatory flexibility analysis has not been prepared.

Dated:
